

## **PEARL RIVER FISH KILL**



### **What is the Problem?**

On August 9, 2011, a high concentration of liquid waste, otherwise known as "black liquor ", was released from the Temple-Inland Paper Mill in Bogalusa, LA, into the Pearl River. This release depleted the oxygen and killed more than 26 species of fish, according to the LA Dept. of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF). According to LDWF, the kill area was extensive- an estimated 40-50 miles long.

### **What did Tracking do?**

Staff from LEPHT supported outreach activities; assisted in development of a comprehensive monitoring plan for air, water and seafood; created air, well water and oyster bed maps; evaluated seafood and private well water data; and conducted post-event health surveys of regional emergency departments and clinics.

### **Improved Public Health**

The data collected and maps created, had an impact on monitoring, risk communication, education and other emergency response activities. This impact is also enduring- brochures and monitoring plans developed during past LEPHT projects supported current emergency response efforts. One of the public's main concerns, other than seafood quality, was well water quality. While none of the water sources tested actually took water from the Pearl River, LDHH tested them out of an abundance of caution and to reassure the public of water safety. Staff took aggressive measures to obtain the needed data, evaluate and translate these data into information, and to get this information out to the concerned public in a timely manner to address their concerns.